

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, July 12, 2007.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This is to notify you formally, pursuant to Rule VIII of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, that I have been served with a subpoena, issued by the Westminster, Colorado Municipal Court, for testimony in a criminal case.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is consistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.

Sincerely,

JOHN BRISTOL,
Congressional Aide.

COMMUNICATION FROM CONGRESSIONAL AIDE OF THE HON. MARK UDALL, MEMBER OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from Carter Ellison, Congressional Aide, Office of the Honorable MARK UDALL, Member of Congress:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, July 12, 2007.

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CARTER ELLISON,
Congressional Aide.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 2419.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

FARM, NUTRITION, AND BIOENERGY ACT OF 2007

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 574 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 2419.

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IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 2419) to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes, with Mrs. TAUSCHER in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Chairman, today we have a bill before us that is known as the farm bill, but this bill is much more than about farms. It is about the food we eat, the clothes we wear, and, increasingly, the fuel that we will use.

The farm bill assures that we will have a safe, strong food supply now and for years to come. It funds nutrition programs and ensures that working families have enough to eat. It provides conservation programs to protect the environment. It funds rural development programs in support of our rural communities nationwide. You can see that this farm bill is certainly about more than just farms.

In addition to these important priorities, this farm bill also provides the safety net that allows our Nation's farmers and ranchers to continue to provide the food, fiber, and fuel that meet the needs of Americans and people around the world.

America is still the world's breadbasket, and that is something we should be proud of. Over the past year, my colleagues and I have traveled across the country from New York to Alabama, to my neck of the woods in Minnesota, and all the way to California. We heard from folks who are out there every day working the land, producing a diverse range of agriculture products.

The farm bill is a product of agreements that we have reached by consulting everyone interested in this process. In addition to hearings across the country, we have worked with nutrition advocates, conservation and environmental organizations, renewable energy groups, and representatives from all parts of the fruit and vegetable industry, in addition to the farm groups traditionally involved in the farm bill.

At the end of that process, we now have more than 100 organizations representing conservation, nutrition, rural development, renewable energy, labor and farm groups that have signed on in support of this bill. I think that this unprecedented support is a direct result of our efforts to be inclusive in this farm bill process.

There are very few issues that the National Farmers Union and the American Farm Bureau Federation can agree on, but at the end of the day, they both support this bill.

The members of these groups who support our farm bill are the real experts on farm policy because it is a reality that they live each day of their lives. They are the ones on the land planting the crops, managing the livestock and taking the risk inherent in

the industry of farming. They are the ones who represent the people using the farm bill's nutrition programs. They are the ones working to implement good conservation practices in the communities across this country. If they support our bill, then I know that we're doing the right thing.

This farm bill also includes significant reforms. Of course, some people think we went too far. Others think we didn't go far enough. But everybody seems to agree that they never thought that we could get an agreement that went as far as it has. That is what this farm bill is about. We got the different groups into the room and produced an agreement that everyone feels like they've been part of the process, even if they didn't get exactly what they wanted.

This bill does make significant changes, including a hard cap on subsidies for the first time ever. We've taken the \$2.5 million adjusted gross income cap down to \$500,000. And we have put a hard cap on of \$1 million so that anybody over \$1 million of adjusted gross income will not receive farm payments after this bill passes.

We have also cut the soft cap that I mentioned on adjusted gross income to \$500,000. We also, in this bill, required direct attribution for the first time of farm program payments so that people won't be able to get around the payment limits by receiving payments through different business entities. These are not insignificant by any means, and these changes will affect thousands of farmers nationwide.

In the area of conservation, too, we have made significant changes as well as new investments. One thing we've done, we have included the same kind of payment limits on conservation programs that we have had for farm programs. That way, there's more money available to more farmers to participate in these popular programs.

The bill also includes \$3.8 billion in new spending for conservation programs over the next 5 years. These programs help farmers protect the environment with programs that reduce erosion, enhance water supply, improve water quality, increase wildlife habitat, and reduce damage caused by floods and other natural disasters.

This farm bill provides new resources to protect and preserve the Chesapeake Bay and other high-priority areas, and it encourages private land owners to provide public access for hunting, fishing and other recreational activities.

In the area of renewable energy, this farm bill invests in programs that will help encourage the development of cellulosic ethanol in this country. In my opinion, this represents the future for American agriculture. Once we can establish the first facilities that can make ethanol from agricultural waste and other biomass products, we will take a huge step in a new direction for agriculture and for rural America.

Many of the best feedstocks for cellulosic ethanol will also provide benefits for wildlife and for the environment. Renewable fuels have brought new investment and new jobs for rural America, and this is one of the most exciting things that's happened in my life and in American agriculture.

We have also proposed increases in the farm bill's nutrition title. This has been a source of some controversy this week, but not because people disagree with the idea that we should be increasing these benefits which have been stagnant for many years and making sure that benefits keep pace with inflation.

Instead, the controversy has involved the proposal that the Ways and Means Committee has proposed to offset the cost of these changes. I hope that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will recognize that there is a difference between closing a loophole in current tax law and increasing taxes. This proposal won't raise taxes, but it will hold some foreign companies who should be paying taxes accountable for what they owe.

The Agriculture Committee agreed, on a bipartisan basis, that these changes in the nutrition program were important to help working Americans access these nutrition programs, and we have found a reasonable, fiscally responsible way to do this.

Another area where this farm bill makes great strides is in funding for programs that strengthen the fruit and vegetable industry. We have worked with this industry and have included \$1.5 billion in new mandatory money for them in this farm bill. That's the first time that we've done this.

The Specialty Crop Alliance, United Fresh, and many other fruit and vegetable groups strongly support this bill as passed by the Agriculture Committee.

We also worked with several caucuses in crafting this bill, including the Congressional Black Caucus, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, the Congressional Native American Caucus. With the Congressional Black Caucus, we have worked to address important issues, including a program in the manager's amendment that will help black farmers who did not get their day in court due to inadequate notice and an arbitrary deadline established after the Pigford case was settled. This provision will allow farmers who filed their claims after the national deadline to have their cases heard.

We have also included other provisions to make USDA programs more accessible to minority, socially disadvantaged and beginning farmers and ranchers. This includes provisions to expand access to land, credit, conservation and rural development programs.

One of the most important compromises reached in this farm bill was an agreement to finally, after a long delay, implement mandatory country of origin labeling. We put both sides in the room; we told them to come out

with a compromise, and they delivered. As a result, with this farm bill, consumers in this country will finally be able to tell where their fruit and vegetables and meat products in their grocery stores are coming from, and we think it's about time.

We accomplished all of this under an open process where everyone was included. All members of our committee were engaged in this process, and I'm proud to say that some of our newest freshman Members, including colleagues that have been there for years, really brought a lot of constructive ideas and a spirit of bipartisan cooperation to the table and helped us come up with a bill that we are all very proud of.

There is something in this bill for everybody to like. There's probably something in this bill for everybody not to like. But it's a step in the right direction and has broad support, as I said, from many organizations. And I encourage my colleagues to support this farm bill which supports all of us with food, fiber and fuel.

Madam Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, I yield myself 5½ minutes.

Madam Chairman, it's a sad day for American agriculture when the Democratic leadership pits America's farmers and ranchers against America's working class. The tax increases included in this bill stand to jeopardize millions of American jobs by raising taxes on companies that do business in the U.S. Not only does this provision cunningly added by the Democrat leadership after the bill left the control of the Agriculture Committee jeopardize American jobs, it stands to violate treaties with other nations and lead to significant ramifications for U.S. companies with operations in other countries. Worst of all, we're not even considering a tax bill; we're considering a farm bill, a farm bill that has been twisted into a partisan pawn.

At the beginning of the week, I stood beside the chairman of the Agriculture Committee to voice my support for this bill that we had worked in a bipartisan fashion to bring to the floor. I had only one caveat, that the offsets not be in the form of tax increases. Not 24 hours before we were to consider this bill on the floor, we were made aware of a tax increase provision that had been added to this language behind closed doors. Unfortunately, all of the good things contained in this bill have been overshadowed by very partisan elements of what should be a bipartisan bill. Today we should be debating the merits of this bill, a bill that was carefully crafted to meet the calls for reform and expand programs such as nutrition and fruits and vegetable programs. But the leadership has decided to take American agriculture out of the debate on the farm bill.

Heading into the reauthorization of the farm bill, Agriculture Committee Republicans anticipated problems with

the budget, given the collapse of the baseline projections for the commodity programs. The lack of funding for the nutrition interests further compounded the problem. As the number of nonfarm interests in farm bill funding has grown and the availability of funding dwindled, farm programs have become particularly vulnerable, and the Democratic leadership and the Budget Committee refused to address the needs of a forward-looking farm bill.

From the start, the Agriculture Committee Republicans have made our concerns about funding for this bill very clear. When the chairman announced his projected farm bill time line on May 17, I urged him not to rush the process and find the offsets before promising the money in the farm bill language. Again and again, I, along with my subcommittee ranking members, have implored the committee to slow down, to wait until the money is available before moving ahead.

At the Conservation, Credit, Energy and Rural Development Subcommittee markup on May 22, both subcommittee ranking member FRANK LUCAS and I urged caution in rushing the process.

On May 24, at the Livestock, Dairy and Poultry markup, the message was the same. The subsequent markups on June 6, 7, 15 and 19, the message to the leadership of this committee was the same; slow down and find the money. We were consistently told the money would be made available, and we were consistently denied any further information.

It would be disingenuous for my Agriculture Committee Democrat colleagues to claim our objections are at all new or recently conceived. We have worked in a bipartisan fashion throughout this process and had the opportunity to take a bipartisan product of the committee to the floor. But our work has been undermined by the addition of tax increases without consultation, review or due process to cover the extra costs of the bill.

Despite repeated assurances that the \$4 billion in offsets would not come from tax increases, here we are, looking at tax increases as a funding mechanism of choice employed by the Democratic leadership.

Moreover, to insinuate that Democrats were made to do anything by the Republicans' opposition to revisions that would directly impact U.S. jobs is preposterous. The Democrats and the Democrats alone are solely responsible for any modifications made to this bill after it left the Agriculture Committee.

Because the Democrat leadership won't invest in American agriculture, they're calling for increased taxes to pick up the tab to fund our domestic priorities by increasing taxes on companies that provide millions of Americans with good jobs and stimulate economic growth.

I anticipate this tax increase will likely be the first of many needed to fund the priorities that bulge between the majority's budgets.

Rural America is served best when we work together in a bipartisan fashion. With passage of this rule, partisanship invades rural America and destroys bipartisan support for the underlying legislation.

I want to be clear, I support the farm bill. I do not support the nonagriculture, non-Agriculture Committee approved tax increase that has been shamefully attached to this legislation.

Prior to the announcement of this tax increase, it was clear that the administration, which has opposed this bipartisan effort, it was clear that a veto threat was headed our way.

A bipartisan farm bill without this tax increase would have produced a veto-proof majority and would have sent this farm bill soaring into the negotiations with the Senate. Now this farm bill will not be an effective product to move American agriculture forward.

I urge my colleagues to reject this legislation.

Madam Chairman, I reserve my time. Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. I'm now pleased to yield 2 minutes to my good friend, the distinguished chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, Mr. RANGEL from New York.

(Mr. RANGEL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RANGEL. Madam Chairman, it's an honor for me to be here. I wish that we didn't have to mark up the SCHIP bill so that I could be here for the rest of the theater.

I have been overly impressed with the remarkable bipartisan work that Mr. GOODLATTE and Chairman PETERSON have been doing on a very complicated piece of legislation. And I was very surprised that, with their ability to, so-call, offset the expenditures of the bill, that they came to the conclusion that when it came to food stamps they ran out of money.

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Ran out of money to such an extent that I was really completely taken off guard when they told me that the Ways and Means Committee should provide \$4 billion to pay for the food stamps. And I admit I don't follow the Agriculture Committee's work as closely as I should have. But knowing that Republicans as well as Democrats wanted to make certain that 26 million people will continue to have food stamps, I said, where would you expect the tax-writing committee to get the money that is necessary to keep this bipartisan agreement to? I assume if you went to the Energy and Commerce Committee, you would be going there for energy. If you went to the Transportation Committee, you would go there for transportation. And I assume that we talk the same language, and the Ways and Means Committee is the tax-writing committee.

And when you said it was important to maintain this bipartisan agreement, I looked over the jurisdiction of the

Ways and Means Committee. It wasn't \$4 billion in Social Security. It wasn't \$4 billion in Medicare. It wasn't \$4 billion in training, though we were working hard to make certain to break down the barriers so that our farmers could go overseas.

So there is not one living person on the Agriculture Committee that didn't ask me to get it out of what? Taxes. Sorry to use that word, and I don't know who is offended. But we felt that we weren't going to raise individual taxes. We weren't going to increase corporate taxes. So I thought that common sense and political sense would mean that we would find out who is not paying taxes and bring that revenue in so that we can have a bipartisan agreement in the House and the Senate in order to do this.

Now, strange things can happen, and it appears as though it has. But I just want you to know that you can call it offset. You can call it revenue enhancement. And we call it fraud and evasion and equity and fair play. And it is coming out of the tax-writing committee.

I just hope you never come to the tax-writing committee and ask for relief and, when you get it, say you don't want tax increases.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, I yield myself 10 seconds to say to the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee that neither I nor any other Republican on this committee that I know of ever went to him and asked for any, any funds whatsoever, certainly not from a tax increase.

Madam Chairman, at this time it is my pleasure to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. EVERETT), the distinguished ranking member on the Agriculture Committee.

(Mr. EVERETT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. EVERETT. Madam Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to the 2007 farm bill. The budget resolution that we were forced to work with was woefully inadequate for production agriculture. Moreover, the Ways and Means Committee, regardless of what the chairman says, included a tax increase on companies to pay for this bill.

I have great concerns for Southeast peanut producers, who grow almost 85 percent of all peanuts grown in this Nation. They are the number one losers in this bill. There is included, in the manager's amendment, an important new initiative that will not only help all peanut producers address rising input costs, but will ensure greater yields and better stewardship of the land through enhanced crop rotation. But the \$10 million annually allocated for this program is not enough to ensure this program is successful.

The "Farm Bill" is called the farm bill for one reason—to address agricultural needs of our farmers and ranchers. However, the bill before us seems to forget the farmer and rural America—specifically at a time when many of them are facing difficult times.

I understand the financial constraints that we had to work on this bill. But in light of

those constraints, significant funding increases were given to conservation and nutrition programs at the expense of production agriculture. Additionally, I oppose the last minute developments that have occurred to attach a provision to increase taxes to pay for some of these increases.

I strongly oppose these actions, they should not be in the Farm Bill, and overall it will hurt Americans.

I am also concerned over how this additional funding is being allocated. Specifically, \$1.6 billion was specified for specialty crops—most of this money going to California—a state that is ranked 10th nationally in receiving federal subsidies. Additionally, \$150 million was set aside in the bill for air pollution in California.

Secondly, conservation funding receives a \$1.35 billion increase in funding. A significant amount of that money has been set aside for specific watersheds. In particular, the Chesapeake Bay Region is receiving \$400 million alone for conservation programs for this watershed.

Historically, the Chesapeake Bay and other watersheds specified in the bill have received billions of dollars in the past for these efforts and should not be given special preference in this bill. Chesapeake Bay has received over \$700 million annually for conservation programs addressing the watershed. Why do they need preference throughout the program when the rest of the nation is also addressing similar issues?

I am specifically concerned over the preference being given to several watersheds under the new Regional Water Enhancement Program. I was pleased that this new program was included in the bill—it is an issue very close and dear to my heart. I have been working on this legislation for several years and I am pleased that much of the language of my Farm Reservoir Act has been included in this program. This program will provide cost-share assistance to agricultural producers for projects like the construction of on-site reservoirs. It upsets me that specific watersheds were given priority consideration under this program.

Fortunately, an amendment during full markup was included to limit these watersheds in receiving no more than half of the funding. However, I believe that the Regional Water Enhancement Program should not be a place for "earmarks" but open to all regions of the country—all who are dealing with water issues that are important to their region.

For my part of the country, farmers in the Southeast are facing a devastating drought and farmers are faced with the loss of most—if not all—of their crops. Many ranchers are being forced to sell their herds since they have no feed for them. This program would help many of these farmers to build farm reservoirs that will help farmers during these difficult times and could help save many of their crops—a savings to taxpayers in the future in crop insurance and disaster payments.

Some would try and argue that my state is guilty of also receiving large subsidies that I have just spoken against. Many of you may be surprised to know that Alabama is in the bottom half of the nation in receiving federal subsidies—27th out of 50. I like to also point out that 72 percent of all farmers and ranchers in Alabama do not collect government subsidies.

These are the same farmers and ranchers that are struggling with severe drought conditions and are hoping for some federal assistance to help them get through these difficult times—whether through disaster payments or federal programs like the Regional Water Enhancement Act. However, a permanent disaster payment was not incorporated in this bill because there was not enough money.

All of the programs in the Farm Bill are important but to receive such a drastic increase while producers are struggling does not seem right. Claiming there is no money to include a permanent disaster payment program for farmers who face significant financial loss of crops due to natural disasters like hurricanes, drought, wild fires, disease, pests and tornadoes—is wrong!

I look forward to continually working with the Chairman and Ranking Member to address many of these concerns as we move forward.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Chairman, I am pleased to yield 6 minutes to the distinguished Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee, my good friend Mr. LANTOS from California.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Chairman, I want to thank the distinguished chairman of the Agriculture Committee, my good friend from Minnesota, COLLIN PETERSON, for his outstanding leadership on this critically important bill.

Today we reconfirm one of this government's most solemn commitments: reaching out to help the most desperate people on the planet. By reauthorizing and strengthening the long-standing and successful Public Law 480 food aid program, we show the entire world that we are serious about using our vast resources for resoundingly positive action.

The 850 million people around the globe without sufficient food cling to a precarious existence: foraging for daily sustenance, unable to take care of their starving families, and locked into a perpetual cycle of poverty and hunger.

The lack of food is particularly vicious for HIV and AIDS patients, whose medications often make them even hungrier. They now live longer with the medications the United States has provided under landmark legislation we in Congress passed 5 years ago, but, Madam Chairman, in a cruel twist of fate, they trade the pains of the disease for the pangs of hunger.

The plight of the starving represents one of the most disturbing and dire societal shortfalls on this planet, and addressing worldwide hunger represents the most unambiguous American moral obligation that faces us today.

That is why the international food aid programs reauthorized in Chairman PETERSON's bill we are considering today demand our full and enthusiastic support. We sit here discussing this bill in the comfortable, air-conditioned Capitol, where we cannot really fathom what it is like to be scrounging for food in one of the world's many developing nations. I hope my colleagues will remember this when considering any effort to weaken these indispensable initiatives.

Our bill reauthorizes the historic and widely praised Public Law 480 food aid program. Public Law 480 was originally established in 1954, and it propelled the United States into worldwide leadership in the donation of food to developing nations and their millions of people. For more than half a century, our groundbreaking law has utilized the abundant agriculture resources of America to help ameliorate hunger around the globe.

Public Law 480 and the other food aid programs are so successful because of a simple recipe: the combination of the American people's compassion, and the dedication of private organizations and the companies that make the programs work. This supply chain highlights the unparalleled productivity of our farmers and processors and the dedication of those who administer, transport, and distribute food aid.

This broad and diverse network has enabled Congress and the executive branch to sustain strong funding levels to feed the world's hungry for decades. Our legislation before Congress today maintains this strong coalition; yet at the same time, it updates and modernizes the program to make it more effective.

I am particularly delighted to highlight that this bill restores mandatory funding for the landmark McGovern-Dole program, which lives up to the accomplishments of the two great former Senators, one Republican, one Democrat, who created it. This program specifically targets the legions among the world's starving who are least able to help themselves: the children of the poor across the globe.

The bill also increases funding for developmental food aid. The administration in recent years has blurred the line between so-called "developmental food aid" and "emergency food aid." But with 850 million people starving on this planet and the vast majority of them chronically short of sustenance, the beneficiaries of developmental food aid are just as needy as recipients of emergency food aid. They don't care what pot of money funds the donated food; they only care to see their families fed.

The manager's amendment proposed by the distinguished chairman Mr. PETERSON includes language that was passed by my Foreign Affairs Committee authorizing a critical \$2.5 billion for international food aid programs.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in passing this most important legislation, which will ensure the United States continues to lead the way in addressing the patently unacceptable plight of the world's hungry.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, at this time it is my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma, another of our ranking members on the committee, Mr. LUCAS.

Mr. LUCAS. Madam Chairman, I thank the chairman and ranking member for this effort this evening.

I would have never thought that I would be standing on the floor of the United States House advocating ultimately a "no" vote on the farm bill. I would have never thought that. As a farmer from Oklahoma, as an individual with a degree in agricultural economics from Oklahoma State, I would have never thought that I would be advocating a "no" vote on a farm bill.

How did we get to this point? Let's remember, first and foremost, farm bills, while the goal is to help rural America, while the goal is to help make farming and ranching a thriving industry, the real goal is providing the food and fiber supply that feeds and clothes this Nation and the world. And since the 1930s, we have done an exceptional job with these farm bills, an exceptional job, and it has been a non-partisan, nonpolitical process. We may disagree by region, we might disagree by commodity group, but it was always pulling together for the good of this country and the consumers that we serve around the world.

We have now come off of two extremely successful farm bills: the 1996 bill with its dramatic reform, flexibility in production decisions, certainty of payment; the 2002 farm bill, building on that with a safety net. Two very successful farm bills.

As a matter of fact, they were so successful that the amount of money set aside for the 2002 farm bill, we spent \$60 billion less than was projected, and that was where we got into trouble, and that is what has got us to this point. Sixty billion dollars we saved, and we got not one penny's worth of credit for it.

So we began this farm bill process with \$60 billion less than we had 5 years ago. That was a decision made by the senior leadership in the new majority. When you are \$60 billion down and trying to move successful and popular programs forward, you have got problems. Chairman PETERSON worked diligently. The entire committee worked diligently. But, ultimately, when we were not given credit, we had to depend on a massive tax increase.

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Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Chair, I yield myself 15 seconds to respond.

I just want people to remember what happened with the '95-'96 farm bill, which was a partisan farm bill. So, we've been down this road before.

I recognize the distinguished subcommittee chairman, my good friend, Mr. HOLDEN from Pennsylvania, chairman of the Conservation Credit, Energy and Research Subcommittee and vice-chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, for 2 minutes.

Mr. HOLDEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for yielding the time. And thank you for your leadership on this important piece of legislation that we have worked on in a very bipartisan manner. And thank you for the leeway that you have given the subcommittee chairman in bringing this product to the floor.

And it's not easy. We are a diverse country when it comes to our agriculture interests, and the diversity on the committee reflects that. But we all came together. We all gave up things that we wanted in the bill. The chairman has been talking for 2 years about permanent disaster relief. That's not in the bill because we couldn't afford everything. Everything that I wanted for the northeast is not in the bill. Everything the ranking member wanted for Virginia or my good friend, Mr. LUCAS, for Oklahoma is not in the bill. We all had to come together, and we have delivered a product that is fair.

In the subcommittee that I chair, under the conservation title, a \$4.3 billion increase in conservation; that's above baseline, 35 percent increase. We went around the country hearing what farmers cared about the most about conservation; it was EQIP. What did we do with EQIP? We put 50 percent additional funding in EQIP.

In my neck of the woods and in the ranking member's neck of the woods in the mid-Atlantic, farmland preservation, by far. When we went to New York to have the hearing, the importance of farmland preservation. In this bill, we have a 100 percent increase in farmland preservation, as well as other water quality improvements. For those who care about the Chesapeake Bay, \$150 million for river restoration. So we have a strong conservation title.

Credit. We made improvements for credit that we will be discussing shortly after general debates that will make credit more accessible in rural America.

Energy. Everybody in this Congress, not just committee, but everybody in this Congress has been talking about the need for us to become more energy independent. In this bill, we have \$2.4 billion in the energy title; \$2 billion in loan guarantees so we can help this infant industry of cellulosic ethanol and biodiesel and take advantage of our agricultural natural resources that are so abundant in this country so that we can now take a step towards being no longer dependent upon the smooth, continuous flow of oil from the Persian Gulf.

This is a good bill, and I ask everyone to support it.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, at this time, it is my pleasure to yield 1 minute to the distinguished Member from California (Mrs. BONO).

Mrs. BONO. Madam Chairman, I share the concerns of the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS). But I also would like to speak today on a specific provision within H.R. 2419 that I'm happy to say will soon bring to resolution the implementation of what Congress has wanted for 6 years, country-of-origin labeling, the act of simply letting U.S. consumers know where the product they're picking up in the grocery store is from. Sounds simple, logical and straightforward; yet for too long Congress has been putting off the implementation of mandatory COOL.

In 2001, I introduced an amendment to the last farm bill to provide for

COOL, and the amendment passed with strong bipartisan support. I have continued to push for mandatory labeling of fresh fruits and vegetables ever since 2001, and the debate has definitely evolved ever since.

Because of this, led by the efforts of Chairman PETERSON and Ranking Member GOODLATTE in having all viewpoints come together to discuss a solution, we now have a product that can be widely supported by consumers and farmers. In particular, the changes relating to produce will ensure that we have sound policy that isn't subject to the whim of misinterpreting congressional intent by the Department of Agriculture. From reasonable fines and penalties for not following the law to a provision that allows for the labeling of a State or region from which the product came to further spotlight our high-quality domestic production, the agreement on COOL is a strong one as depicted in the Manager's Amendment.

Madam Chairman, with recent concerns over importing products from foreign countries like China, the importance of country of origin labeling as a matter of public safety and the right of the consumer to make an informed choice has only become more urgent.

Again, I want to express my sincere appreciation to Chairman PETERSON for his interest and focus on addressing this issue, as he was able to bring parties together for a reasonable and bipartisan solution to mandatory COOL.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. I am now pleased to recognize another subcommittee chairman, the chairman of the Specialty Crops Subcommittee and my good friend from North Carolina (Mr. MCINTYRE) for 2 minutes.

Mr. MCINTYRE. Thank you, Chairman PETERSON, for your leadership throughout the development of this farm bill and working diligently to craft a bill that protects our Nation's farmers, our environment, and our families of rural America.

The legislation under consideration by this House is critically important to rural America. I'm pleased that our subcommittee has worked on this to make sure that the value of agriculture is clearly understood.

The peanut industry contributes \$800 million in value to our rural areas. The sugar industry creates some 372,000 direct and indirect jobs in 42 States, and our rural development programs fill a critical gap in providing infrastructure for our rural areas, ensuring that folks in rural America have adequate EMS units, fire trucks, libraries, and water and sewer systems.

Particularly with regard to rural development, this bill will further enhance these rural programs that will allow rural America to have better access to technology and better help for rural entrepreneurs. In fact, the new Rural Entrepreneur and Microenterprise Assistance program will reach some of our most important businesses, those companies employing 10 or less people, which now are the biggest drivers of economic development in rural America.

And the Rural Broadband Loan program and the Community Connect Grant program are two extremely important pieces that will help the citizens of rural America, making sure they have access to high-speed Internet that can often make the difference in the success of rural business and rural opportunities, and help our businesses, schools, health, and make sure that family life is better.

Just below this Chamber, downstairs on the first floor of this historic building, you can look up at the ceiling and see inscribed there the words of Daniel Webster who said that "farmers are the founders of civilization." I hope that, indeed, all of us will remember this; that our very existence depends on the success of our farmers and on agriculture in making sure that rural America is respected and able to succeed as it will under this bill.

Madam Chairman, I urge all of our colleagues to support this bill so that, indeed, it will be the strong success we need throughout rural America.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, at this time, it's my pleasure to yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Colorado (Mrs. MUSGRAVE), a very strong member of the committee.

Mrs. MUSGRAVE. Madam Chairman, I come tonight to this floor with a very similar attitude that most of us on this side of the aisle are feeling. We have worked together on this farm bill, worked in good faith with the chairman and the subcommittee chairman. And as the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Specialty Crops and Rural Development, I can say that the most important work in Congress that I have been doing is on this farm bill.

But in the markup committee process, Madam Chairman, I offered an amendment with a sense of Congress being that there would be no tax increases to pay for this farm bill. And the chairman of the committee, Madam Chairman, ruled it out of order, and his words were, "No one here is talking about a tax increase."

So, we've gone in good faith in developing this farm bill, but now all bets are off because we were not told the truth, and we find ourselves tonight in the very awkward position of having to oppose a farm bill that we helped craft because of the tax increase.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Chairman, I am now pleased to recognize the chairman of our General Farm Commodities Subcommittee, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE), for 2 minutes.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. I thank the chairman for his hard work, and really on both sides of the aisle, for all the Members who put in long hours, who traveled across this country and listened to farmers and commodity groups speak.

Madam Chairman, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2419. It's an important piece of legislation.

Madam Chairman, this has been a long process. In the early part of the year, our Subcommittee on General

Farm Commodities and Risk Management continued to hold hearings. We listened to groups. All the groups came, they talked, they made their recommendations.

The message we heard from farmers was that they like the basic framework that was created under the 2002 farm bill. Not only did we preserve that framework, but we made improvements so that the safety net worked more effectively.

And yes, as a result of the farm bill in 2002, we saved money, which meant that we had a greater challenge. We maintained the three-legged stool that supports farmers through direct payments, counter-cyclical payments, and marketing loan benefits. We adjusted loan rates and target prices to achieve a rebalancing between commodities that was long overdue.

We included several improvements to the cotton marketing loan program to make it more reflective of current market realities and values, as well as corrected problems in the program that we experienced since the elimination of the Step 2 program.

We also provided assistance to the textile industry to enhance their competitiveness and help keep those jobs here at home.

This could be called not only an Ag bill; it's a jobs bill, as well as a national defense bill, because we use it for food and fiber to feed our people.

I'm also proud that we're also providing farmers with the opportunity to experiment with revenue-based counter-cyclical programs. While most producers are satisfied with the current counter-cyclical program, some farmers are interested in the revenue-based approach.

Providing farmers with the option to choose between these two types of counter-cyclical programs allows them to make the best economic decision for their families. This revenue counter-cyclical program will also provide us with better insight into how the program works so we can determine if it is a better model for future farm bills.

H.R. 2419 contains Rural Development programs that will better facilitate the financing of essential rural infrastructures like public water and waste disposal systems. It establishes grant and loan programs for rural healthcare facilities. It will improve access to broadband telecommunications services in rural areas.

The Bill also expands funding for a host of conservation programs, including the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Maintaining the 60 percent share of EQIP funding for livestock is extremely important to North Carolina's poultry and pork producers.

As a representative from one of the most agriculturally diverse states in the Nation, and a member of the Horticulture and Organic Agriculture Subcommittee, I am particularly pleased that we are providing, for the first time ever, mandatory dollars for programs that benefit fruit and vegetable producers as well as the ever growing organic agriculture industry.

For our tobacco farmers who have been trying to get into specialty crop production since the buyout, these new programs will support the industry through projects in research, mar-

keting, education, pest and disease management, production, and food safety.

We are strengthening the nutrition title through extra money for the Emergency Food Assistance Program; raising the minimum benefit for Food Stamps, which hasn't been done since 1977; and eliminating cap on dependent care, which opens up the program to more working families.

We are reforming crop insurance to provide better coverage for organic producers; expanding data mining to root out waste, fraud, and abuse; and providing an extra option for producers to obtain supplemental area-based crop insurance in addition to their current revenue or yield policies.

We have accomplished all this, and so much more. But we did it with a responsible budget. Operating under the Pay As You GO (PAYGO) requirements has posed difficult challenges for the Agriculture Committee, but I believe we have managed to preserve for farmers a sound safety net that provides extra protections, while staying within our budget.

In addition to my service on the Agriculture Committee, I serve on the House Budget Committee. Yesterday, we had a hearing with the Director of the Congressional Budget Office and the Comptroller General of the United States.

They testified about the budget calamity this Administration and the previous Republican Majority have left this country in. A calamity which made the job of passing a farm bill that much harder this year.

According to their testimony, were it not for the policies of this Administration and its Republican allies in Congress, the federal budget would be in balance today.

Yet the Republican priorities are so out of whack that today, one of the fastest growing segments of the federal budget is interest on the national debt.

And most of that debt is financed by foreign countries like China who may not always have America's best interests at heart.

It was a Democratic Congress that restored fiscal discipline to the federal budget through PAYGO rules, and this Farm Bill responsibly adheres to those rules.

I thank the Chairman for his hard work on moving this bill to this point, and I urge my colleagues to support farm families, support feeding children, support moving to renewable fuels, and vote for H.R. 2419.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, at this time I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas, another of the subcommittee ranking members on the Agriculture Committee, Mr. NEUGEBAUER.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Madam Chairman, I woke up on Monday this week very excited about the opportunity to bring this farm bill to this floor, but as you can imagine, my disappointment tonight because of the culmination of 2 years worth of hearings all across America, subcommittee hearings, 31 hours of markup in full committee working on a bill that is going to be good for America, good for American agriculture, working in a bipartisan way to make sure that all of agriculture has a bright future for this country, making sure that America will have a good source of food and fiber for the years to come and that it

will not become dependent on importing food as we have become in importing energy in this country.

And you can imagine my disappointment because we've worked in a very bipartisan way with the chairman, working on the safety net for American producers when the commodity prices were low and then working on a safety net when we have drought conditions, weather conditions, to provide an additional safety net for them.

But unfortunately, we were duped, I guess is the best way I can say it. As we were working along with the leadership, they kept saying we are going to find some additional offsets so that they can expand these nutrition programs while at the same time asking American producers to take cuts in payments, but with the understanding that we weren't going to have any new taxes. Unfortunately, Madam Chairman, that isn't the way this farm bill was written up.

Today, without any debate, without any discussion, the American people's farm bill was put in jeopardy. It now faces a Presidential veto. It now faces opposition from Members of this body that would have voted for this farm bill, but now they are not going to vote for this farm bill because it raises taxes.

And what we've known and what we've tried to say to the American people over the last few months is we knew this was coming because this new leadership has started off on the old way they used to do business under the promise of doing business in a new way, by taxing and spending, taxing and spending. And it's unfortunate that we would bring that kind of politics to the American farm policy.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Chair, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining on both sides?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Minnesota has 5½ minutes; the gentleman from Virginia has 17½ minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, at this time, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY).

Mr. BOUSTANY. I thank the ranking member for yielding time.

Madam Chairman, we started off in a very bipartisan way to put this together. We worked in good faith. We worked long hours to come up with a really good farm bill. And when it was all done, we all felt very good about it. We had a great night. We patted ourselves on the back, very pleased with the commodities program, pleased with conservation. It was a good bill.

And where are we today? We've had this tax provision put in at a late hour. We have a tax provision that was not properly vetted by the Ways and Means Committee. It was placed in this by the Democratic leadership, using the Rules Committee to legislate. And this has threatened a very good farm bill.

There are problems with this. First of all, I don't think we really know

what the real impact is going to be with this tax provision on the cost of feed, fertilizer and pesticides. Many of the companies that are going to be taxed with this new tax will be forced to raise prices on this. And our farmers are already suffering from the high cost of inputs, particularly in my State of Louisiana, which is suffering from the aftermath of two hurricanes.

Furthermore, this bill has Davis-Bacon provisions in this which are going to hurt a nascent industry, the nascent cellulosic ethanol industry. I spoke to the CEO of a company today, and this is going to raise the cost of building these new facilities by 10 to 20 percent. This is an industry that we want to see grow. We don't want to tax it.

Finally, the bill places unfunded mandates on the States. I tried in committee with an amendment and tried to get this to a full floor debate to help our States continue to modernize the Food Stamp program, to have the flexibility to do the right thing. This bill, the underlying bill, has provisions in it that take away the flexibility that our States currently have. It puts the State of Indiana in real jeopardy, at risk of losing \$100 million.

This bill is less and less about farmers and it's more and more about pure raw politics.

□ 2030

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY), a member of the Agriculture Committee.

Mr. CONAWAY. Madam Chairman, this bill left our committee on a bipartisan basis and with my enthusiastic support. I agree with many of the laudatory comments made by my colleagues across the aisle. You will hear that there is a broad group of associations, commodity groups, and, most importantly, producers that support the bill that left our committee.

Now you need to know the rest of the story. My colleagues and I were repeatedly told that the necessary offsets would not come from tax increases. We have just heard Chairman RANGEL confirm that his taxing committee provided taxes for the offset. I was misled, I hope unintentionally, but nonetheless misled. Over the last 48 hours, poison pills have been added that the cynical among us would conclude were intentional; short-sighted, but intentional.

Each of us must weigh the good and bad in all the legislation that we consider. Great judgment is required. Last week at this time, almost at this exact time, I fully expected to be here tonight perhaps fighting off bipartisan opposition to this bill, but nonetheless supporting this bill, not participating in a raw, partisan fight that was totally unnecessary.

This bill is proproducer and prohungry around the world, but it is antibusiness and antimanufacturing jobs. It is an affront to States rights and unnecessarily panders to unions.

Sadly, we have gone from a bill that should have passed with broad bipartisan support to one that will not enjoy that support.

Madam Chairman, I urge my colleagues to oppose it.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to the chairman of the Livestock, Dairy and Poultry Subcommittee, my friend, the distinguished gentleman from Iowa (Mr. BOSWELL).

(Mr. BOSWELL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOSWELL. Madam Chairman, I thank the chairman for his hard work.

Madam Chairman, how many times do we have to hear over and over and over from the borrow-and-spend community across the aisle here? I hope that they would remember there are positive things that happened.

We brought the livestock community together. They are moving forward. It is good for America. We brought the dairy community together. For perhaps the first time, there is no dairy war going on because they sat down in a compromise. We can't thank them enough. You might remember that. Also, we addressed the issue of mandatory country of origin labeling. We worked out a compromise. We are going to go forward and meet the consumers' wishes on that.

As chairman of the Livestock, Dairy and Poultry Subcommittee, I cannot say how pleased I am for those compromises and the overall steps this legislation takes. Is there still room for improvement? Sure, there is. But the Agriculture Committee came together and wrote a farm bill for 50 States that would not only benefit farmers, ranchers and rural America, but benefits everyone.

As everyone walks away today at the time when we finish this bill, I would like them to remember one thing: Every man, woman and child has a vested interest in agriculture. By ensuring that our producers have an adequate safety net, we in turn ensure we have the safest, most plentiful and affordable food in the world.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, I yield 1 minute to a distinguished member of the Agriculture Committee, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY).

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Madam Chairman, I am a proud member of the Agriculture Committee. My grandfather was a county agent. My mother was an extension service agent. One out of three Nebraskans make their living in the field of agriculture.

Of all the rancor and divisiveness in this House, the Agriculture Committee has been one place where cooperation and comity is the tradition. I was proud to be a part of crafting this farm bill. The farm bill passed out of committee by a voice vote. No one objected.

It is not perfect. It is a huge piece of legislation with many moving parts.

But I felt that it did make progress in promoting agriculture entrepreneurship, agriculture-based energy production and a renewal of conservation in land stewardship goals.

But the end of this process has been seriously disappointing. The spirit of the Agriculture Committee's work has been violated. I want a vibrant agriculture system that feeds our country, helps feed the world and in turn preserves a way of life, a tradition that marks the character of our great country.

Madam Chairman, I urge the majority party to get this process back on track.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Chairman, I yield 2 minutes to my friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. BACA), another of our great subcommittee chairmen, the chairman of the Subcommittee on Department Operations, Oversight, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Mr. BACA. Madam Chairman, I rise in strong support for this farm bill. Let me say that clearly this bill does not increase taxes. As chair of the Subcommittee on Department Operations, Oversight, Nutrition, and Forestry, I want to say that I am especially proud of this farm bill, what it does for the nutrition of minorities, seniors, disabled, single parents and for our veterans.

Right now there are 38 million Americans who do not have enough to eat. Eleven percent of the population are going hungry. Today in the Latino community and the African American community, that rate is double.

This farm bill fights hunger in America by making an historic investment in nutrition. Our nutrition title will benefit over 13 million American families.

Currently the average food stamp recipient receives only \$21 a week. That is unacceptable. This farm bill will make food stamps keep up with the cost of living. Gas, health care, housing and grocery bills have gone up, but food stamps haven't kept up. We are going to change that.

This is going to help working families, our disabled, our senior citizens, our veterans and our single parents. Most importantly, it is going to help our children. Fifty percent of food stamp recipients are kids. That is what this farm bill is about: feeding our children; leaving no child behind. This farm bill will ensure that children will have access to fresh fruits and vegetables in all schools by expanding the USDA snack program to all 50 States.

This farm bill ensures that senior citizens and disabled adults have enough to eat by continuing the Commodity Foods Supplemental Program and expanding access to farmers' markets.

What it will also do is help military families. For the first time, this bill exempts military combat pay from being counted against the income of men and women who are fighting for us.

Madam Chairman, I urge my colleagues to vote for this bill. It is an excellent bill that meets needs across America and helps all of us.

We're also going to make it easier for them to handle their paperwork processing by allowing telephone signatures.

And what about our military families? This is the first Farm Bill to exempt Special Military Combat pay from being counted against our military families who are trying to make ends meet while their loved ones are serving in places like Iraq or Afghanistan.

We have fought to ensure that Food Stamps cannot be privatized—and we have taken an extra step in this Farm Bill to remove the stigma in the Food Stamp program.

We are going to eliminate embarrassing coupons, transition everyone to EBT cards and change the name of the program to the Secure Supplemental Nutrition Access Program, or SSNAP.

Now our working families will be able to go to the store, swipe their SSNAP cards and bring food home to their children with dignity.

We also help support our food banks and soup kitchens by giving large increases to The Emergency Food Assistance Program.

The "TEE-FAP" not only serves our homeless, but provides life-saving assistance to our families after natural disasters, like Hurricane Katrina.

Simply put, this Farm Bill strengthens our Nutrition safety net like no other farm bill has ever done before!

This farm bill is also historic in its commitment to diversity in Agriculture.

This bill increases agriculture opportunities for underserved communities such as African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, and Asian-Pacific Islanders.

We give \$150 million dollars in mandatory funding for outreach to small and socially disadvantaged farmers.

This bill also requires an annual report to Congress to see if our outreach to minority farmers is working.

The Farm Bill also creates an Advisory Board to deal with civil rights violations.

We require that 10 percent of conservation funding go to our small and disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

The Farm Bill also creates new programs and increases funding for minority serving institutions and tribal colleges.

In addition—we have preserved the Davis-Bacon provision to ensure workers in rural America earn a decent wage.

We have worked hard to create a Reform Farm Bill that includes all of us—farmers, working families, minorities, urban communities, rural America.

This bill is a good bill that will ensure that all Americans get a fair shot.

It makes a historic investment in nutrition and increases opportunities for traditionally underserved communities. I urge my colleagues to support this vital legislation.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), a new member of the committee who has distinguished himself.

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. I thank the ranking member.

Madam Chairman, I rise today in disappointment. Disappointment, because only 6 months ago I sat in this chair to

be sworn into this body, and I listened to our Speaker sit up at that podium and say this body was going to talk about partnership, not partisanship.

When I went onto the Agriculture Committee, I thought I found that partnership. For 6 months, we worked in a bipartisan manner, and I will tell you, I was proud of the fact to work with my colleagues, my colleagues like JIM COSTA and DENNIS CARDOZA. We worked together in a bipartisan fashion on bills such as this farm bill. We even looked to the 21st century and putting in specialty crops. We have done tremendous items when it comes to this farm bill.

But I will tell you that that was all taken away this week. That all changed when we now decide to raise taxes, \$4 billion. Instead of looking for the future, instead of thinking of our children, who are going to compete for the first time since the 1860s, to have economies that are going to compete in America, to be as large as or even larger when you talk about China and India, now we are going to take away jobs. That is not partnership. That is partisanship.

And it is not like we bring up a farm bill every year, or we even bring it up every 2 years. We only talk about a farm bill twice every decade. We are missing an opportunity. We are missing a very big opportunity.

That disappointment, when I think back 6 months ago when I listened to our Speaker say that, I listened earlier tonight to our debate when we had our chairman from the Ways and Means Committee down here talking about why he wanted to raise taxes. And I listened earlier this week when we had appropriation bills, and you wonder where does the money go? We build monuments to ourselves, because people think they have served in this body long enough that they should spend \$2 million building their own libraries. That is not what the American people are asking for. That is not what the American people are looking for.

I guess I when I think back 6 months ago, the Speaker should have looked at a quote from Dwight Eisenhower, when Dwight Eisenhower said, "You don't lead by hitting people over the head. That is assault, not leadership."

Let's send this bill back and have real leadership, and go back to the bipartisanism that the Agriculture Committee has experienced for the last decades, because there is only two chances we have for it for the next decade.

Madam Chairman, I ask for a "no" vote.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Chairman, I yield for purposes of a unanimous consent request to the gentleman from California (Mr. CARDOZA), the subcommittee chairman of the Subcommittee of Horticulture and Organic Agriculture, one of our outstanding Members, who has done a great job.

(Mr. CARDOZA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARDOZA. Madam Chairman, I rise in support of the bill.

Mr. Chairman, I'm proud to stand with you, on the House floor, at this historic moment in the development of U.S. farm and food policy.

For the first time in the history of the farm bill, this year our farm policies will put fruit and vegetable growers on an equal playing field with commodity farmers. Fruits and vegetables are a growing and important component of American agricultural output.

In 2006, U.S. production of specialty crops—fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits and nursery crops—accounted for \$53 billion, or 44 percent of total U.S. crop receipts.

The fruit and vegetable industry benefits from marketing, research, and educational programs, rather than traditional crop subsidies, to manage the challenges of increased global trade and foreign competition. These challenges include increasing domestic consumption, reviving export growth, aggressively managing food safety, and mitigating pest and disease problems.

The 2007 Farm Bill addresses these challenges by providing \$365 million in new mandatory funding for the specialty crop block grant program. Block grants are vital for ensuring that solutions to these myriad challenges are flexible and locally driven.

This bill also responds to the pest and disease management needs of the specialty crop industry by establishing a comprehensive early pest detection and surveillance program. The bill provides \$200 million in mandatory funding for this new program to work in cooperation with State departments of Agriculture.

The needs of America's nurseries are addressed by directing USDA to collaborate with nursery industry organizations as it develops, tests, and disseminates new systems of nursery pest and disease management.

It also establishes within USDA a program for a National clean plant network. This network will provide a sustainable source of pest and disease free horticulture stocks.

ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

This bill responds to the preferences of consumers across the United States by making an unprecedented investment in organic agriculture. Organic foods are the fastest growing sector of U.S. retail food sales—growing at approximately 20 percent annually over the past decade.

In 2006 organic retail sales reached almost 3 percent of the entire United States food and beverage market. The 2007 Farm Bill recognizes growth in the organic food sector by expanding the assistance available to producers converting from conventional agriculture to organic production.

To help with the transition the 2007 Farm bill provides \$22 million in mandatory funding for the National Organic Certification Cost Share program.

Organic farmers need reliable market information to assist them in production and marketing decisions.

This bill does that by providing \$3 million in mandatory funding for data collection on price, production volume, and other organic market characteristics. Most data currently collected by USDA is of little relevance to organic producers because it is collected without regard to the method of growing.

The historic recognition of the horticulture and organic industries in the 2007 Farm Bill is an important accomplishment and sets American farm policy in a new direction for the 21st Century.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT), one of our great committee members and a great friend of mine.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Madam Chairman, we are at an extraordinarily important moment. The people of America are watching us all across this country.

The U.S. agricultural community and industry employs over 20 percent of our entire workforce and accounts for \$3.5 trillion every year in our economy. And it is just somewhat baffling to me as we look, and we have worked together in the committee to get many competing forces together, that the gentleman and gentlewomen on the other side of the aisle would turn their backs on the American people and all the work that we did together and in bringing these competing forces together, whether it was black farmers or our Traditionally Black Colleges, or food stamp recipients, all with compelling needs, country of origin labeling, on a whimsical excuse, because we had to balance and score this at a time so that we would have pay-as-you-go so we wouldn't put it on the backs of our children and grandchildren to pay for this farm bill; went to Ways and Means and asked them to find a way to get us \$4 billion, and they went and got a way that was first presented by President Bush.

President Bush said, let us close this loophole on foreign companies that are using what is known as earning strippings to stop paying taxes like every other American business. When President Bush said this just 6 months ago, there was no hue and cry about a tax increase.

There is no tax increase on this. This is a good bill. Let's pass it.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, I yield myself 20 seconds to say to the gentleman from Georgia that no one on this side of the aisle is turning their back on anybody. We are simply recognizing that increasing taxes in order to pay for what is in this farm bill is the wrong thing to do. To set businesses who have invested in this country and the American workers whose jobs depend on them against that is very, very wrong, and I would suggest to the gentleman that everyone I have talked to has called this a tax increase.

Madam Chairman, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG), a distinguished member of the committee.

Mr. WALBERG. Madam Chairman, after months of bipartisan work in the House Agriculture Committee on a farm bill that meets the needs of American farmers without raising taxes, House leadership is inserting a 600 percent tax increase on U.S. subsidiary manufacturers in the 2007 farm bill. Democrats want to slap manufacturers, who employ 5.1 million American workers and pay \$325 billion in wages, with a massive tax hike.

As representative of a State and a district where the agricultural and

manufacturing industries account for a larger share of employment on average than in the rest of the Nation, this is a double slap in the face.

Many are not aware that Michigan, the auto capital of the world, is second in the Nation in agricultural diversity. Not only do I feel like the months I spent canvassing my district meeting with farmers and members of the agricultural community were for naught, I am also deeply worried about the impact of this proposed tax hike on south central Michigan.

□ 2045

In the Wolverine State, U.S. subsidies play a vital role in supporting jobs and employing 201,000 Michiganans.

I just inquire of the other side: Why are we moving away from policies that encourage job development and investment? And what is a tax increase on manufacturers even doing in the farm bill?

The Ag Committee put aside partisan differences and worked together on a bill that meets the needs of American farmers without raising taxes. The House should be voting on that bill, crafted in a bipartisan manner, that meets those needs without foisting this on the public.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS).

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Madam Chairman, I thank Mr. GOODLATTE for all of his time and hard work on this legislation, as well as the members of the committee who traveled to Washington State for a farm bill listening session last year.

I rise today to highlight the need for a strong farm policy that will ensure the success of farmers in eastern Washington and across the Nation. Agriculture is the number one employer in Washington State, and in eastern Washington, a \$1.1 billion industry.

I support a farm bill that makes a strong commitment to specialty crops by investing in nutrition, research, pest management, and trade promotion programs.

Whitman County is the leading producer of wheat and barley in the United States. The 2002 farm bill changed how marketing loan rates were calculated for wheat, and as a result, our wheat growers have been left out of the intended safety net. Although I believe to ensure fairness we should calculate counter-cyclical payments by class of wheat, I am encouraged that growers will have the option to choose a revenue-based payment.

I am disappointed dried peas and lentils were not placed on equal ground, but we can work on that later. I am committed to working for policies that will help our farmers and ranchers compete. However, I am disappointed

that this bill will raise taxes on companies.

Mr. GOODLATTE. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING), a member of the committee whose work we appreciate.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Madam Chairman, I thank the ranking member for yielding me this time.

I said earlier there were five reasons to vote against this bill. I just sat down and wrote a list. Now there are seven. Some of them have been added to it since it passed the committee. We are facing a tax increase, a huge tax increase. That is something that a lot of us can't cross.

The abrogation of treaties. When you think about the implications not just of companies doing business in the United States but the reaction when the retribution comes from foreign countries when they start to change their trade agreements and treaties with us. That is going to mean it is going to be nearly impossible for us to negotiate bilateral trade agreements, WTO trade agreements; and that draws a bright line against trade.

There is Davis-Bacon wage scale in this bill. I will make the prediction that the 5th Congressional District of Iowa will remain the number one renewable fuels congressional district in America. Last year we put over a billion dollars of private capital into that, and we did so without the Davis-Bacon wage scale. We did it with merit shop wages. We built good plants, state of the art, and developed the technology. We are number one in biodiesel in my district. We will be number one in ethanol by the end of this season. We will stay there because they are not going to use this component because they will not be able to afford it. It is a 20 percent increase in cost. Where you could build five plants before, now you can only build four. We have a 46 percent increase in Food Stamps under the argument of food insecurity, but yet no one was going without food. They just thought some future meal they might have to worry about. So 46 percent increase in food stamps.

The Pickford v. Glickman that was mentioned by the gentleman from Georgia, there were black farmers that were discriminated against. And some were. But a billion dollars was paid out to some of them. And \$100 million was spent in administration of Pickford, and I looked into that. What we have are 18,000 black farmers in America, 96,000 claimants and a future liability to this bill of \$3 billion in the Pickford piece. I know it is not all authorized, I know we have not found all of the money, but you open the door to that. I will vote "no" on this bill.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON), the distinguished ranking member on the House appropriations agriculture subcommittee.

Mr. KINGSTON. I want to commend the members of the Ag Committee on a

bill that is well put together in some parts. As the chairman knows, he has been very generous with his time, talking to me about the cotton section, the peanut section, and fruits and vegetables. I think there was a lot of good bipartisan support. I commend the committee for that.

Unfortunately, so much of this bill is not direct agriculture. So much of this bill, 60 to 70 percent, and this is true with all farm bills, it is the entitlement section, the school nutrition programs, there are a number of problems I have with that.

Number one, this tax increase is to support an increase in the entitlement section. It doesn't go directly to farmers or help the dirt farmer. It is not intended for that.

I have problems with the tax increase, and I do think it should have been gone through the Ways and Means Committee where it could have been thoroughly vetted and people could have decided what does this mean, because the truth of the matter is there are question marks on both sides.

The second thing, in agriculture appropriations we have had lots of hearings on the Indiana privatization of food stamps. I think it is a great program. I think reducing the government bureaucracy so that you can get more money to the people who need the food stamps, I think that is a good fundamental idea. I think it is one that President Clinton would have appreciated. It is searching for the third way. Not always a Democrat or Republican solution is adequate; you have to come up with something else. This is a hybrid program. This is a privatization program, and I know that is a bad thing for many on the fringe left, but I think most of us in the ag community will agree that it is a good thing. And yet this bill stops that.

The third thing is the special-interest payoff to the unions. Can you imagine, here we are at an energy crisis time. It is \$3.05 if you shop all over town to find the bargain, and we are going to increase the cost of producing ethanol. We are going to say if you build an ethanol plant, you have to use the highly inflated union prevailing wages. It is a special payoff to the unions. We should not increase the price of producing energy during a fuel crunch. It is that simple. This bill does that.

Finally, one of the things that we all do, Republicans and Democrats, we want to balance the budget. We want to cut out the waste, as long as it is done in a different district than ours.

Now, the farm service agencies, there are too many of them. There are 58 that don't even have staff. This bill prevents them from being closed. We need to close some of the farm service agencies. Because of technological changes, we can do that without hurting the farmers, and yet this bill will prevent that from happening. One thing we are all hypocrites on is, hey, let's balance the budget; but, oh, not

here where we have an opportunity to balance the budget. I think that is something that is ill conceived. I know there is bipartisan resistance on that, and it is very difficult for all of us.

I have four farm service agencies in my district that are being closed; and I tell you, it is tough. I hate to see any of them closed, but I realize in the big picture if you want to save money for the farmers for other programs, sometimes you have to make these decisions.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I would just say, Madam Chairman, that we reach this point in a process that has been going on for about 2 years. It spanned both my chairmanship and the current chairman's chairmanship. It has encompassed a great deal of effort to write a bipartisan farm bill. We have listened to hundreds of farmers. We have received input from thousands of farmers and ranchers and others interested in this legislation.

We address the reform that has been requested in a farm bill. We have addressed the concerns about more funding for fruits and vegetables for nutrition and conservation and renewable fuels. And then to have this tax increase injected into this process after the bill has left the committee is why you have heard every single Member on this side of the aisle speak about how they feel betrayed by this process. It is unfortunate for us, but it is also unfortunate for this farm bill because what happens when it leaves the House, if it passes at all, will be very different than if it passed leaving this House with a veto-proof majority. That opportunity has been lost.

I would say to those on the other side of the aisle we can fix that if we would simply slow down and take a look at the appropriate way to pay for the additional funding that is due this committee because we took a \$60 billion cut in the budget. The way to do that is to vote for the motion to recommit that we will offer later on that will say you can have this farm bill that we have all praised and send it back to the committee to look for an appropriate way to do this without pitting American agriculture against American industry by having a tax increase imposed to pay for the things that are in this bill.

That's the appropriate way to proceed here. That would restore the bipartisanship that is needed in this process, and that would restore a good future for this farm bill, which is very much endangered because of the injection of this partisan tax increase that has been laid at our doorstep, the most bipartisan committee in the House of Representatives that has worked so hard and so long. And to be faced with this at the end is wrong. I do not support this legislation.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Chairman, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I would say to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) we have en-

joyed working with you and your Members, but I don't agree with you. I don't believe there is a tax increase in this bill. I have looked at it. I am a CPA, and I think you can say it either way, but I don't believe it is a tax increase.

The \$60 billion did come out of baseline not because anybody cut it, but because the program worked the way it is supposed to. Prices are up and spending went down. We are missing the money, but it wasn't because anybody cut it.

We have a good bill, and I encourage all Members to support it.

Mr. BISHOP of Georgia. Madam Chairman, I rise today in strong support of the Farm, Nutrition, and Bioenergy Act of 2007. I'd also like to thank the members of the Agriculture Committee for their commitment to this effort which has yielded a farm bill that is a victory for all Americans.

This bipartisan agreement provides a strong safety net for not only our Nation's family farmers and small and disadvantaged farmers, but also for millions of American citizens who live below the poverty line and are dependents on Federal nutrition assistance.

Committee members worked diligently, day and night for weeks, to ensure that funding levels and payment limitations were fair, equitable, and available to farmers. It ensures a flexible, affordable and top-quality food supply for consumers while strengthening America's food safety and security.

The farm bill provides a 5-year reauthorization of the farm, rural development, conservation, and nutrition programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, USDA. The 2007 farm bill is fiscally responsible, fully compliant with the PAYGO rules, while still providing a strong safety net for America's farmers and ranchers. It makes vital investments in nutrition, conservation, and renewable energy. This bill will help producers of all commodities stay on the land that they hold and love, so that they can continue with their livelihood, while also conserving natural resources for future generations.

The bill before us today also addresses many of the needs of those in southwest and middle Georgia, Georgia's 2nd Congressional District, which I represent, in terms of protecting our Nation's farmers, conserving our natural resources, and feeding the hungry.

In addition, the bill will provide better balances in support programs between all types of crops. The bill's reforms further encourage farmers to plant for the market, and not for the benefit of government programs. It also provides a sharp increase in funding for fruit and vegetable and other specialty crops, mandates implementation of country of origin labeling, and increases assistance to small and disadvantaged farmers significantly, including important new language with respect to the Pigford case. In addition, the bill increases funding for school lunch and other nutritional programs, and provides for new and extended conservation, research, trade promotion, and rural development programs.

This bill makes much needed strides in reforming the nutrition title to better help Americans adequately cover food costs and sustain themselves for the entire month. It increases the minimum benefit for food stamp recipients, which is especially important for senior citizens in need. It also helps feed our military families by excluding special combat pay as

income when qualifying for food assistance programs.

Finally, I am particularly pleased that the bill proposes and improves the quality of life of the people living in our rural communities by renewing successful programs that provide critical healthcare, emergency and communications needs to underserved areas. It creates a new grant program to assist rural health facilities, improves access to broadband telecommunications services in rural areas with a greater focus on the rural communities of greatest need, and supports critical infrastructure programs for rural cities and towns.

Today, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to "Protect our Farmers." They protect us by satisfying our most basic needs—food, fiber, and fuel. Let us pass this Farm bill today for our farmers across this great Nation who desperately need this support, so that they are able to continue producing a safe and reliable food source.

I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for this bill.

Mr. SHULER. Madam Chairman, this bill includes important reforms that will help conservation efforts by private forest landowners. Today I offer an amendment to help out a little more.

Over 260 million acres of forest lands are in the hands of families and individuals. At least 75 million acres of forests are part of farms. Forests provide habitats for wildlife, a source for clean water, and places to hunt, fish, hike and enjoy other recreational activities.

But many of our privately owned forest lands are threatened by insects or diseases, and these threats are real. Most of the insects or diseases are non-native and invasive, making them difficult to contain.

In my district, private landowners expect to lose all of their hemlocks from the attack of the hemlock wooly adelgid. This loss would permanently alter the diversity and unique forest environment in our region.

Madam Chairman, this bill provides emergency restoration funding for private forest lands that experience a loss or damage from natural disaster. My amendment would take this one step further and allow the emergency restoration funds to be used for treating private forest lands under imminent threat of attack by insect and disease.

In the case of insect or disease, we must stop their invasion before they create the disaster. Preventing the losses will save money and save our forests. Prevention is less expensive than restoration.

Madam Chairman, I thank the members of the committee for their work on this bill to support healthy forests, and I urge my colleagues to support the Shuler amendment.

Mr. HARE. Madam Chairman, on behalf of Illinois agriculture, I rise in strong support of the Farm, Nutrition, and Bioenergy Act.

This bill maintains a viable safety net for our farmers. Since my congressional district receives the second most crop payments of all the freshmen in Congress, a strong subsidy program is critical for farmers in the 17th Illinois Congressional District.

Additionally, the bill encourages biofuel research and production, which are vitally important to my congressional district and the energy security of our Nation.

The 2007 Farm bill also supports rural America through programs that provide healthcare, emergency communications, and

broadband telecommunications services to rural areas.

Before the bill passed out of committee, I joined with many of my colleagues to ensure it funded nutrition programs so that Americans continue to have access to a high quality and inexpensive food supply.

In response, the bill increases the minimum benefit for the Food Stamp Program for the first time in more than 30 years.

For the safety and security of our food and the future of U.S. agriculture, I urge all my colleagues to support the passage of H.R. 2419.

Mr. HOLT. Madam Chairman, our Nation's food inspection system is a critical safeguard in guaranteeing the health and welfare of all Americans. However, the federal protections that have existed for over 40 years are now threatened by a provision in the Farm bill that would allow meat and poultry inspected by state inspectors to be sold across state lines.

The Nation's food inspection system has served our Nation well by providing clear guidelines and a network of dedicated professional Federal inspectors. Its roots go back to the early 1900s, where a Federal inspection system became one of the landmark legislative accomplishments of President Theodore Roosevelt. While occasional problems have developed, on the whole, our national meat and poultry inspection system has been an unqualified success, with minimal incidents of food borne illnesses due to poor practices, handling or hygiene.

So why would we change a system that is so successful? It is my understanding that this change is being proposed to encourage the growth of small meat processing facilities as well as create new markets for state-inspected meat. While more competition and building new markets are laudable goals, they need not come at the expense of food safety or result in the dismantlement of the federal inspection system. No one has made a compelling case that the federal inspection system has truly hindered competition or market development. Thousands of small plants do well under the current inspection regime.

However, in making this change, we are opening the door to problems that could multiply the exposure of consumers to food borne illnesses and food poisoning. The record of plants subject to state inspection is troubling. The USDA IG has repeatedly found that state inspection regimes often do not meet basic requirements for sanitation or cleanliness.

Despite this, language was added to the Farm bill to roll back these protections. A letter to Congress from a coalition of groups promoting food safety pointed out that the provision would:

Eliminate the 40 year old protection in the federal meat and poultry inspection acts that prohibit shipping state inspected meat across state lines.

Make 80% of all federally inspected plants eligible to leave federal inspection in favor of state programs which supporters of the bill insist are more understanding of company problems.

Not allow states to impose additional or higher food safety standards.

Ignore the inability of states to implement recalls of adulterated meat and poultry that have crossed state lines.

The potential for the spread of food-borne illnesses across the country will only increase if we are to allow this provision to remain in the legislation. I plan to work with my col-

leagues to ensure that this troubling provision be dropped when the conference to the Farm bill is convened. Americans deserve the piece of mind that comes with the knowledge that the next meal they consume will not make them sick nor cause them harm.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Chairman, I'd like to thank Representative ALCEE HASTINGS for bringing together, in his amendment, two important pieces of legislation for research funding and protection of habitat for pollinators—the bees, birds, bats and other animals and insects that help sustain more than two-thirds of the world's crop species. Pollinators are responsible for one out of every three mouthfuls of food eaten.

Despite the critical role that pollinators play for our food supply and ecosystem health, we are seeing disruptions of localized pollination systems and declines of certain species of pollinators on every continent except Antarctica. Populations of a variety of pollinator species have been declining in recent years due to loss of habitat, improper use of pesticides and herbicides, replacement of native plant species with non-native or engineered plants, and the introduction of non-native, invasive species, either by accident or through farming practices.

I'm pleased to see that this amendment places a greater emphasis in existing USDA conservation programs on habitat and other pollinator-beneficial best management practices to protect and enhance native and managed pollinators, which was the key component of H.R. 2913, which I introduced this Congress.

In addition, the amendment provides research funding to address Colony Collapse Disorder in honey bees places, an issue championed by my friend Mr. HASTINGS and his bill, H.R. 1709.

This amendment will help keep pollinator populations healthy and improve the viability of our food supply and our environment. I urge its adoption.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Madam Chairman, this is an unfortunate day. Today, here on the floor of the House of Representatives, we are witnessing a blatant disregard for sound policy, fiscal restraint, and due process by the Majority Leadership. The Farm Bill that we are debating today is not the bill that was reported out of the Committee on Agriculture. It is a product of a late night raid by Leadership on the rules process to insert yet another tax increase.

Farm programs have always had their champions and their detractors, but in the 22 years that I have served in this body, it has never been a partisan issue. I have voted in favor of almost every Farm Bill that has come before me, but I cannot vote for this one. I have consistently supported the hard working farmers and ranchers in my district, and I will continue to do so. But I cannot support this tax increase that has been added without debate, and without relevant committee input.

Over the past year, I have had the chance to visit with producers from across my district. Practically every single one of them has told me that the Farm Bill we passed in 2002 has proven to be a sound safety net for their various enterprises. The bill that was reported out of the Agriculture Committee continued those proven principals. Unfortunately, this is not that bill.

As ranking Member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, I am also concerned that

this bill, which has an entire title (Title 9) devoted to energy, was never seen by our committee. Beyond that, it seems that the left hand of our Majority in this body does not know what its right hand is doing. As the year began, I was a little surprised that the Majority seemed disinclined to work with me or other Members of the Minority in preparing energy legislation. But now I realize that they do not even consult with each other.

Take a look at the energy provisions of the Farm Bill. They overlap and duplicate provisions in the legislation reported a few weeks ago by the Committee on Energy & Commerce.

The Farm Bill has incentives for increased ethanol production; grants for consumer education on ethanol; a biomass fuel production section, etc.

Meanwhile, the Energy & Commerce Committee has provisions to do these and similar things in its bill. Energy & Commerce has grants for cellulosic ethanol production, consumer education for flexible fuel vehicles, a study of ethanol blended gasoline, and others.

If the Majority would like, I'll be happy to offer my services to help them sort out and reconcile these provisions among the two bills.

Of course, if the Agriculture Committee's bill had been referred to the Energy and Commerce Committee as it should have been, we could have accomplished that reconciliation before the Farm Bill ever got to the floor, avoiding this confusion, conflict, and redundancy. That is why we have rules in this body on jurisdiction and that's why we should go back to following those rules.

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Chairman, from the time I was young, I was taught that a farmer's livelihood depends on two things: the weather and the markets. While the government can't control the weather, federal Farm Bills provide an invaluable safety net, bringing a level of stability to commodity markets that helps farmers stay in business, make plans for the future, and continue to feed America and the world.

The 2007 Farm Bill would ensure farmers have economic stability by continuing the direct payment program and by keeping in place a strong safety net that allows producers to recoup some of their losses when agricultural markets collapse. The bill would give farmers the option of participating in the counter-cyclical initiative that was created in 2002 or in a new, revenue-driven program.

At the same time, the legislation would make historic reforms by prohibiting those who earn more than \$1 million in annual adjusted gross income from receiving federal agricultural subsidies, by closing loopholes that have allowed some people to avoid payment limits, and by re-balancing loan rates. These changes in current programs would free up additional revenue for the safety net and for the bill's investments in conservation, nutrition, rural development, and renewable energy.

The Farm Bill would make conservation a top priority by increasing funding and access to conservation programs that preserve farmland, improve water quality and quantity, and enhance soil conservation, air quality, and wildlife habitat. Missouri is a very conservation friendly state, and the Conservation Reserve Program, the Wetlands Reserve Program, and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, among others, have allowed farmers to more easily address conservation problems and

comply with expensive, but important, environmental regulations.

By extending and improving the food stamp program and making a strong commitment to other nutrition initiatives, the 2007 Farm Bill would promote the health of the American people and help families in need. The measure would also renew our commitment to rural development, agricultural research, forestry and energy. Important to Missouri's corn and soybean producers, it would authorize \$2 billion in loan guarantees for biorefineries to help finance the cost of developing and constructing renewable fuel facilities. In Saline County, I have witnessed the overwhelming success of Mid-Missouri Energy's ethanol production plant. I am hopeful this bill will foster similar success stories in Missouri and across our land.

Also important to Missourians, the Farm Bill would continue price supports for dairy farmers and create programs for fruit producers. It would also require that all meat sold to American consumers have a country-of-origin label beginning in September 2008. The measure retains the current prohibition on creating a national animal identification to verify the animal's country-of-origin.

I praise Chairman COLLIN PETERSON and other members of the Agriculture Committee for producing a good bipartisan bill. I support it, urge my colleagues to vote in favor of it, and ask them to defeat any attempt to strip away the meaningful safety net included in this legislation.

Mr. WU. Madam Chairman, this year's farm bill creates an education program to give college students an opportunity to participate in policy oriented internships to promote and further develop agricultural biofuels from biomass. I commend the Chairman for incorporating this program into the bill.

The biofuel industry has experienced rapid growth in recent years. Global climate change, and an unstable foreign oil supply, requires the United States to develop alternative energies. To do this, the United States must create leaders in alternative energies. We must recruit the best and brightest across the Nation to participate in the program.

My amendment makes the eligibility criteria fair and opens the door for more qualified students to apply.

As currently written, the program reaches only five specific states. It is important that Congress does not shut out qualified universities and students.

My amendment would expand the program to qualified universities that have fields of study related to the biomass and biofuel industry. Schools with programs in chemistry, environmental sciences, bioengineering, natural resources and public policy would be eligible to participate in the internship program.

This amendment will not add any additional cost to the bill; it will only make the internship more competitive.

Congress needs to provide all students who are studying relevant fields the opportunity to gain practical work experience and to contribute to America's move to greater energy security. As we continue toward that goal, this program will prove invaluable.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this amendment.

Mr. WYNN. Madam Chairman, as Chairman of the Environmental and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee, I rise today in strong opposi-

tion to language contained in the report that accompanies the Farm Bill Extension Act of 2007 (H.R. 2419). The report references a "sense of the committee" amendment that farm animal manure should not be deemed a hazardous substance pursuant to the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) and the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act (EPCRA). The Farm Bill Extension Act does not contain any legislative text discussing whether manure is a hazardous substance under these statutes.

I am strongly opposed to this report language because it would exempt releases or threatened releases of hazardous components of manure from CERCLA and EPCRA.

Large animal feeding operations can be significant sources of pollution. According to the EPA, animal farming operations generate approximately 500 million tons of waste each year, three times more raw waste than is generated yearly by people in the United States. This waste, which is usually untreated by operations, produces hazardous substances such as phosphorous, ammonia, and hydrogen sulfide.

Phosphorous has contaminated local drinking water supplies, requiring additional treatment and resulting in increased costs to ratepayers. The City of Waco Texas for example is spending more than \$54 million for capital improvements to address taste and odor problems caused by excessive phosphorous released by cow waste.

I also attach a letter from the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies, dated July 23, 2007, that discusses the negative impact that such an exemption would have on the quality of our Nation's drinking water supplies.

If hazardous substances from livestock waste are exempted from CERCLA, states and local governments would be denied the ability to protect their valuable water supplies and to recover costs associated with cleaning up these hazardous substances from drinking water sources.

If hazardous substances from livestock waste are exempted from EPCRA, toxic release information would be withheld from communities and emergency responders. Many of the large feeding operations release large volumes of hazardous air pollutants, such as ammonia and hydrogen sulfide. A number of studies have determined health problems among animal feeding operation workers and residents who live near these operations, including bronchitis, asthma and antibiotic-resistant bacterial infections.

This exemption is unwarranted because CERCLA already includes a specific exemption for the normal application of fertilizer. Only those livestock operators who excessively apply manure to the land to get rid of it, rather than use it to fertilize crops, have potential liability.

We should not allow these large animal feeding operations to escape liability for causing pollution to our communities and pass the costs onto community water systems and ratepayers.

Livestock waste should not be exempt from the environmental protections that CERCLA and EPCRA provide.

ASSOCIATION OF
METROPOLITAN WATER AGENCIES,
Washington, DC, July 23, 2007.

Subject: Oppose CERCLA Animal
Waste Exemption in Farm Bill.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES: As the House of Representatives prepares this week to consider legislation to reauthorize the Farm Bill, we urge you to reject language that would exempt components of animal waste from designation as a hazardous substance pursuant to the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA). Enactment of such an exemption would bring about serious consequences for the quality of America's drinking water supplies.

During last week's markup of the legislation, the Agriculture Committee adopted an amendment expressing the "sense of the committee that farm animal manure should not be considered as hazardous substance" under CERCLA. This follows the introduction earlier this year of legislation in the

House and Senate that would specifically exempt animal waste and its components from the law.

As representatives of community drinking water systems, we believe it is important to note that animal manure itself is not currently considered a hazardous substance, pollutant or contaminant under CERCLA. Moreover, the law already contains an exemption for the normal application of fertilizer that includes manure.

However, phosphorus and other CERCLA-regulated hazardous substances that are known to compromise the quality of drinking water are commonly present in animal manure. If Congress were to provide a blanket CERCLA exemption for animal waste, consolidated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) would be free to discharge manure containing such hazardous substances into the environment without regard to its impact or liability for its damages. As a result, the costs of additional treatment to make water potable would be forced upon community water systems and their ratepayers, un-

fairly shifting the burden of cleanup away from polluters.

Later this year, Congress will celebrate the 35th anniversary of the Clean Water Act, landmark legislation modeled on the belief that all Americans must share the responsibility of maintaining the health of our nation's water supply. Exempting CAFOs from their fair share of this duty not only threatens to reverse the water quality gains that have been realized over the recent decades, but would also set a dangerous precedent encouraging other polluters to seek waivers from our environmental laws.

Again, we urge you to oppose a blanket exemption for animal waste and its components from the important requirements of CERCLA.

Sincerely,

DIANE VANDE HEI,
Executive Director.

The CHAIRMAN. All time for general debate has expired.

NOTICE

Incomplete record of House proceedings. Today's House proceedings will be continued in the next issue of the Record.